

Although I live in a suburban area today, I grew up in Rural America (a small town in IN) and still have family there. Cell phones have become a mainstay of life for all of us. Many of them (including my elderly parents) only use cell phones and do not have landline phones. This is their only way to communicate if an emergency occurs and this is VERY important as my father has cancer and they are on the road quite often back and forth to the hospital and doctors visits.

Please help improve the lives of rural Americans by protecting and expanding the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless providers. Wireless telecommunications is no longer a luxury in our society; it is a fundamental necessity for public health, safety and economic development.

Capping the fund will shut the door on rural America. Less USF support for rural wireless networks will leave us with poor coverage, dropped calls and dangerous dead zones. The urban/rural technology gap will only widen.

Rural America deserves the same cell phone service as our big cities. I urge you to expand – not cap – the USF. Please don't leave us behind.

Thank you.  
Cheryl Pickett